

## Commanding General's 2008 Independence Day Message

On July 4th, 1776 the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence and embarked on an experiment in democracy, which has continued for the last 232 years. Passed on from one generation of Americans to the next, this experiment has become a vanguard of "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" for all nations throughout the world. Each year on this day Americans everywhere celebrate the birth of our country, honor those visionaries who conceived the idea that "all men are created equal," and remember the sacrifices of every man and woman who has fought, bled or died to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign or domestic.

A founding father of our country, Samuel Adams, once said "The liberties of our country, the freedom of our civil Constitution, are worth defending at all hazards; and it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors: they purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood, and transmitted them to us with care and diligence. It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy on the present generation, enlightened as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle, or to be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men." Samuel Adams' words remind us that there will always be those who threaten our way of life, that freedom is earned, and that each generation must pay a price to preserve

America for the next generation. I would like to personally thank all of you, on behalf of a grateful nation, for the hard work and dedication that you exhibit on a daily basis to preserve the legacy of our forefathers. You are doing an outstanding job, and I am very proud of you all.

As stewards of our nation and way of life, we have a responsibility this 4th of July not only to enjoy ourselves, but to be mindful of safety and observe proper Operational Risk Management. The San Diego summer brings with it beautiful weather, which is accompanied by certain hazards that we must all be aware of: ensure that you and your families are drinking plenty of water to avoid succumbing to heat-related injuries; if traveling, make sure that you are well rested and your vehicle is properly maintained; do not drink and drive; and if you are taking advantage of our beautiful oceans and bays, make sure that you understand all boating laws, observe all safety regulations, and remember that drinking while operating a boat is not only dangerous, it is illegal. Above all relax, enjoy your time with loved ones, and return well rested and in good health. You are all vital to our nation and the continuing success of our Corps. Have a great Independence Day and Semper Fidelis!



A. SALINAS  
Brigadier General  
U.S. Marine Corps  
Commanding General

## Hands-free cell phone laws effective July 1

BY GUNNERY SGT. LAURA  
GAWECKI  
*Chevron staff*

On July 1, two state laws affecting the use of cell phones while driving will take effect. The first law prohibits all drivers from using handheld wireless telephones while driving. Drivers age 18 and over must use an ear piece or similar hands-free device. The other law also taking effect July 1, prohibits drivers under age 18 from using a wireless or hands-free device while driving.

"The under eighteen law is going to be a big difference (in affecting traffic safety)," said California Highway Patrol spokesperson, Jaime Coffee. "They (those under age 18) can't send messages to their friends or text, and this will remove the distractions so that they can focus on the task at hand: driving."

California is one of 14 states, and the District of Columbia, to prohibit cell phone use by those under 18, according to the American Automobile Association.

Those 18 and over are still free to text message. However, an officer can pull over and cite drivers of any age if the officer believes the driver

was distracted and not operating the vehicle safely, according to the law.

The fine for the first offense is \$20. Subsequent convictions are \$50.

Violators will not receive a point on their driver's licenses if convicted of driving while using a hand-held device, but the violation will appear on their driving record, according to the California Highway Patrol media relations office.

On base, violators of the law will receive a ticket and points toward their base driving privileges, but no fine, according to Maj. Gregory S. Rooker, Provost Marshal, Marine Corps Recruit Depot. Points are assessed by the base magistrate, and the average penalty for using a hand-held device while driving is two to four points, said Rooker. The level of the penalty is left to the discretion of the magistrate, he said.

Military family members who receive an on-base ticket must go to the magistrate court downtown to receive a fine, said Rooker.

"We are hoping for fewer tickets," said Rooker. "We have given warnings for a long time and posted the law at all the gates. After July 1, we will issue tickets."

## 8th MCD commanding officer explores his father's past

BY STAFF SGT. J. J. RODRIGUEZ  
*8th MCD*

Every Marine starts his life in the Marine Corps by meeting the one person he will never forget. They may hate the voice that is forever imprinted in his mind, but one thing is for sure — Marines never forget their drill instructors. This was the case for Larry Toal, the father of Col. Mark J. Toal, the commanding officer of the 8th Marine Corps District.

In the colonel's office hangs his father's boot camp platoon photo from 1953. Every time he looks at it he is reminded of not only his father who died in 1997, but of the stories his father told to him as a child of the senior drill instructor, Sgt. Raymond E. Kiemel.

On a whim, Toal searched the internet for Kiemel and found his address through the 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Korea Web site. He wrote Kiemel a letter, and to his surprise, Kiemel answered.

On a recent trip to San Diego, Toal met Kiemel for dinner, and during their conversation, Toal

realized that his father's first Marine mentor was a true American hero.

Kiemel is a Korean and Vietnam War veteran, and a former recruiter, as well as drill instructor.

The 76-year-old joined the Corps in August 1948, the same day he turned 17. As a youth, Kiemel was a cadet at Mount Lowe Military Academy in Altadena, Calif., and followed every campaign in World War II.

"I yearned for that individual attention and was very impressed with the Marines," Kiemel recalled.

His mother signed the enlistment paperwork and he received the individual attention he craved upon reporting to boot camp.

As a private first class, Kiemel spent his first two years in the Corps at Marine Barracks Subic Bay, Philippines. In September 1950, he was assigned to 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment as a heavy machine gunner under the leadership of Medal of Honor recipient Col. Raymond Davis.



Retired captain Raymond Kiemel, right, talks with depot drill instructors May 2. Kiemel, a former recruiter and two-time war veteran, served as a drill instructor in the early 1950s. In his final platoon, Kiemel trained Pvt. Larry Toal, the father of 8th Marine Corps District commanding officer, Col. Mark Toal. Staff Sgt. Jeff Janowiec

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# Be alert: check-fraud scams may cost thousands

BY CPL. CARRIE C. RUIZ  
*Chevron staff*

The depot's Legal Assistance Office is warning service members and their families against a recent outbreak of the Nigerian Counterfeit Cashier's Check Scam that has targeted three members of the depot family in the past two months.

In one case, an individual was conned out of \$6,000 in a check-fraud scam. Another individual received a suspicious check and brought it into the Legal Assistance Office; the check turned out to be fraudulent and the person avoided being swindled.

The victim, who asked to remain anonymous, was browsing the classified ads online for a job where she could work from home. She found one located in the United Kingdom that was looking for a payment officer to handle their American clients.

The scammer explained to her that her job would be to cash money orders, send the cash back to him and keep 10 percent for herself. She did this

for three checks, but when she took the forth check to her own bank, they immediately told her it was fraudulent.

Over time the three checks she had cashed with the other bank also came back as fraudulent. She said that when she tried to contact the scammer, he never responded.

"I was held liable for the money lost and now I am in a considerable amount of debt because of this scam," said the victim. "All I was told I could do was file a complaint over the internet."

The victim said that since she was scammed, she has been contacted by many other con artists looking to hire her for similiar jobs.

There are many different variations of the Nigerian Counterfeit Cashier's Check Scam, the scammers have some very sophisticated schemes, according to Angela Anderson, general attorney, Legal Assistance Office.

Individuals are targeted through sales ads, lotteries and secret shopper scams. The payment can come in the form of counterfeit cashier's checks, money orders, corpo-

rate or personal checks that look so genuine that many banks cannot tell they are illegitimate.

The scammers often target consumers who are selling high-priced items through classified or online auction ads, according to www.consumerfraudreporting.org.

The scammer will reply to the ad and ask if he can pay for the merchandise using a check. They then concoct a reason for writing a check for more than the purchase price, and ask the seller to wire back the difference after he deposits the check.

It may take two or three weeks to confirm the check's authenticity. By then it is too late for the victim, who has already wired the money to the con artist, and they are held liable for paying the bank back.

"The scammers make their ads seem so believable, and often try to connect with the consumer using religion or common interests," said the victim.

In a lottery scam, a consumer receives a letter notifying them that they have

won the lottery. Accompanying the letter is a check and a note explaining the process to deposit the check and wire back the funds to cover the taxes and fees for the lottery winning. When the check bounces, the consumer is held responsible for the withdrawal made and must pay back the bank.

In a secret shopper scam, a consumer is hired as a secret shopper, and his first job is to evaluate a money transfer service. The consumer is given a check and told to deposit it in his bank account and withdraw the amount in cash. Then, the consumer is told to take the cash to the money transfer service and send the transfer to a person in another city. When the deposited check bounces, the consumer is held liable to the bank.

Service members and civilians who receive suspicious checks or have questions regarding these scams should contact the Legal Assistance Office (Bldg. 12) at (619) 524-4105 immediately. Walk-in hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8-10 a.m.

## BRIEFS

### Traffic citations

Violators of depot order 5100.10B, dated Sept. 3, 2003, will be issued on-base citations for wearing portable headphones, earphones or other listening devices while operating a motor vehicle or jogging, walking, skating, skateboarding or bicycling on depot streets. The prohibition against these devices is for the safety of the user. The devices prevent recognition of emergency signals, alarms and announcements. The devices also block the sound of approaching vehicles, human speech and the ability to determine the direction from which sound is coming, rendering the wearer incapable of avoiding hazardous situations.

### Flag football league

The Commanding General's Cup Flag Football League is under way. Games are held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Marine Corps Community Services sponsors the games which are open to MCRD active duty and MCCS DoD employees on the depot. For information, call (619) 524-0548.

### Rock 'n' Roll Freedom Fun Run

The depot will host the 3-mile Rock 'n' Roll Freedom Fun Run Wednesday at 1 p.m. at the Boathouse and Marina. Race-day registration begins at 10:30 a.m. The event is free and open to the public. There will be a free barbecue after the run. For information, call (619) 524-5655 or register on-line at <http://www.mccsmcrd.com>.

### Auto Car Care Class

Active duty, reservists, retirees and DoD personnel and their guests are invited to learn car stereo and alarm installation, and window tinting. The class is scheduled for July 10 from 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the depot Auto Skills Center. For information, call (619)524-5240.

### MOAA luncheon

The San Diego Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America hosts a luncheon July 14 at Tom Hams Lighthouse Restaurant on Harbor Island.

Guest speaker is Gerald Hosenkamp, who spent many years in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia in a legal and economic advisory capacity to the Saudi Royal Family and the Rafiq Hariri family of Beirut. He was injured in the terrorist attack at the Marine Barracks Oct. 1983. All civilian and military personnel are welcome.

The event is scheduled for 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Lunch will be served at about 12:45 following check-in and a brief business meeting. Hosenkamp will speak after lunch and will be available for a question and answer session.

Admission is \$20 per person. For reservations and information, call (858) 442-0668 or e-mail [bmarcum@san.rrt.com](mailto:bmarcum@san.rrt.com) by Wednesday, July 10.

SEND BRIEFS TO: [roger.edwards@usmc.mil](mailto:roger.edwards@usmc.mil). The Chevron staff reserves the right to publish only those briefs that comply with Department of Defense regulations and the standards of the U.S. Government.

### Father's past, from pg. 1

He took part in the Inchon Landing in Korea. Under the worst of tidal conditions, along with a contingency of Marines, Kiemel scaled the bay walls under intense fire. From there he moved throughout Korea from Chosin to Hagaru-ri through the Fuchilin Pass to Koto-ri.

There were two major events that stand out in Kiemel's mind during this time.

The first was manning a road block Nov. 10, 1950, when he saw a Marine Jeep and trailer accompanied by armed guards quickly approaching.

"Why would they want to pay us out here?" he thought. The trailer turned out to be filled with bread, rather than paychecks, which Kiemel said was better because the men hadn't eaten bread in several weeks. Guards were there to keep the distribution of bread orderly, and each Marine received a third of a loaf.

"That was the best bread I ever tasted," said Kiemel.

It would be many weeks before they had bread again.

On Nov. 25, 1950 Kiemel's Machine gun squad had set up another road block on the main supply route at Yudamni. Two days later, just before dawn, Chinese communist troops appeared from seemingly nowhere—ensuing some of the worst fighting of the war. The Battle of Chosin Reservoir had begun. Kiemel did not yet know it, but this part of his life would ensure his place in history as part of The Chosin Few.

"The fighting was so ferocious that night that we burned out a barrel from one of the .30-caliber water cooled machine guns which required antifreeze to operate in the brutal cold," he recalled.

Later it was determined that the Marines fought off approximately 60,000 troops.

In May 1951, Kiemel left Korea and returned to Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., and served as a drill instructor.

At only 20-years-old then, Cpl. Kiemel had already seen war. His experience at Inchon and Chosin served him well while training the future Marines, Kiemel said.

"My dad attributed his discipline and values to the Marine Corps," said Toal. "As long as I can remember I heard stories of Sgt. Kiemel. He was a direct connection to my father and his service in the Marine Corps. He has always been a Marine hero in my eyes," recalled Toal.

Only a month after graduating his first platoon of Marines, Kiemel attended the newly-established Drill Instructor School at MCRD and was in the first graduating class. He made the rank of sergeant and soon became a senior drill instructor. With exception of one platoon, every one of his platoons graduated with honors.

Kiemel graduated his last platoon in May 1953. Larry Toal was in that platoon. Kiemel then applied and was accepted to recruiting duty and was assigned to Recruiting School at MCRD Parris Island, S.C. After graduating, he was



Retired Capt. Raymond Kiemel, left, and Col. Mark Toal, 8th Marine Corps District commanding officer, meet for the first time in March 2008 in San Diego. Kiemel was Toal's father's drill instructor in 1953. Toal felt compelled to meet the man about whom his father had shared so many stories. Photo courtesy of Col. Mark Toal/8th MCD

transferred to Aurora, Ill., which fell under the 9th Reserve and Recruitment District now called the 9th Marine Corps District.

Kiemel had a successful recruiting tour in Illinois and was even awarded for recruiting the most women at a time when the Marine Corps was pushing to recruit more women into the Corps.

On September 1956, with his recruiting assignment coming to an end and now a staff sergeant, Kiemel applied for a lateral move into the electronics field. Upon completing the 16-week electronics school at Naval Station Great Lakes, Chicago, Kiemel was sent back to MCRD San Diego for radar school. Then he was sent to Atsugi, Japan, for service with Marine Air Control Squadron 1, part of Marine Air Group 11.

Kiemel's tour in Japan ended in 1959 when he received orders to Marine Logistics Center Barstow, Calif. His primary responsibility there was in quality control; checking the repair and rebuilding of all radar equipment at the facility. In 1962 he met and married his wife Carolyn. The couple lived there until March 1963 when he received orders back to MCRD San Diego where he was assigned to Advanced Electronics School until he received orders to MACS-2 in Hawaii.

It was during this time that the Vietnam War started. He did not immediately go with the first wave because his unit stayed behind in Kaneohe Bay. Kiemel continued to advance in his career and was promoted to gunnery sergeant and then to temporary second lieutenant.

According to Kiemel, while he was a temporary second lieutenant he continued to concurrently be promoted in the enlisted ranks. He made it to master sergeant just before deploying to Vietnam and to warrant officer 2 in the officer ranks while in Vietnam.

It was 1966, Kiemel went to Da Nang, Vietnam, and joined Communications Company, Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division. He was the platoon commander for Communications Repair Platoon.

Kiemel's squadron returned to Atsugi after a deployment to Corregidor. In 1958, MAG-11 was called to defend the city of Kaohsiung on the southern tip of Taiwan. It seemed Chinese Communists began shelling Matsu and Quemoy islands in the Taiwan Strait in an attempt to take over.

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Kiemel made it to the rank of captain and retired from the Marine Corps in 1971 at Naval Air Station Olathe, Kan.

Meeting Col. Toal brought back many memories for Kiemel and the confidence in the Corps he left behind many years ago.

"He was everything I think a Marine should be," said Kiemel referring to Toal.

Toal said Kiemel still looks like he could train a few more Marines.

"Finding "Sgt." Kiemel and meeting him was really an honor," said Toal. Just like his father; he will never forget "Sgt." Kiemel.

One of Kiemel's assignments was to help coordinate the "McNamara Line," named for then Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. The line ran from Cua Viet to Khe Sanh. The purpose of the line was to keep northern infiltrators from coming through the demilitarized zone into South Vietnam.

Kiemel and his team periodically traveled along the line from Dong Ha to inspect the equipment and maintenance records.

The base at Cua Viet, located on the China Sea, was situated on deep sand. During one inspection trip they experienced an enemy artillery barrage. Running for his life through the ankle-deep sand toward a bunker for cover, Kiemel recalled feeling as if he were in a slow motion nightmare. Fortunately, the deep sand smothered some of the shrapnel from the artillery shells, making them less effective.

Kiemel received the Navy Commendation Medal with valor for his actions in Vietnam. After Vietnam Kiemel was promoted to first lieutenant and returned to Hawaii and then back to MCRD San Diego.

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# New amendment benefits military members

BY LANCE CPL. SHAWN DICKENS  
*Chevron staff*

On January 1, an amendment to the Song-Beverly Consumer Warranty Act took effect. The act, also known as the "Lemon Law," was changed so that it now protects all military personnel stationed in California.

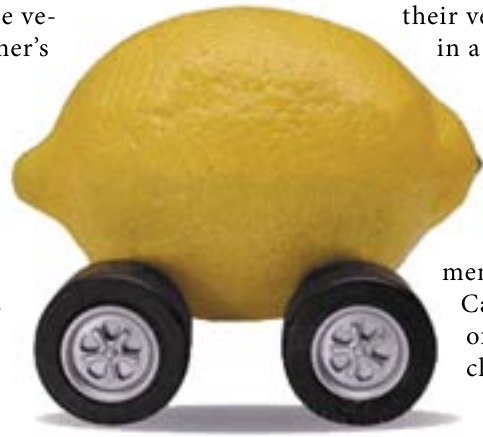
The Lemon Law protects consumers who buy or lease a motor vehicle that is still under manufacturer's warranty. If the vehicle has recurring problems affecting the use, value or safety of the vehicle and the vehicle manufacturer is unable to fix the

problem, the Lemon Law requires the manufacturer to either repurchase or replace the vehicle at the consumer's option.

Prior to January 2008, the California Lemon Law only protected consumers who purchased vehicles in California. The new amendment however, allows military service

members to qualify for relief using the California Lemon Law even if their vehicle was purchased in a different state.

Service members can file a claim if the vehicle manufacturer sells vehicles in California, and the service member is stationed in California at the time of the vehicle purchase or at the time in which the Lemon Law action is filed.



# The mule's story can show the way through life's challenges

CHAPLAIN RONALD R. RINGO  
*MCRD HeS Battalion*

With all that has been going on in the world, you, like me, may have been feeling a bit overwhelmed lately. I know that many with whom I have been talking recently, say they feel anxious and shaky because their plates are full.

Do you feel the same?

We, as a people, have been through a lot. Many have been glued to the TV watching war developments, elections and the weather.

I'd like to share a story that I used at one of our alcohol rehabilitation centers.

A farmer owned an old mule. The mule fell into a dry well. The farmer heard the mule braying and found the mule. He sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of

saving.

Instead, he called his neighbors together, told them what had happened, and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially the old mule was hysterical. But, as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling, a thought struck him. It dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, he could shake it off and step up. This he did blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up, shake it off and step up, shake it off and step up! No matter how distressing the situation seemed the old mule fought panic and just kept right on shaking it off and stepping up.

It wasn't long before the old mule, exhausted, stepped triumphantly over the wall of that well. What seemed like

it would bury him actually helped him, all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.

That's life. If we face our problems and respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness or self-pity, the adversities that come along to bury us, usually have the potential to benefit us.

We all will face times of great darkness, hurt and trouble. In the scriptures, the ancient prophet Micah gave us words of hope. He said, "When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me."

To find the light that will guide us through our difficult times and troubles, we might want to look to our Lord for divine inspiration and assistance. Then, like the mule in the story, we may see opportunities we hadn't before noticed.

Like the mule, we may be battered and bruised and feel panicked at times, but "shake it off and step up" will overcome our trials. We will grow in strength and build confidence in knowing that we don't have to ever go it alone. God is there. He invites us to allow him to be a light that guides and assist us to a happier, brighter future.

My favorite scripture verse says, "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as on eagle's wings; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not be faint." (Isaiah 40: 29 & 31)

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Private Larry Toal, Col. Mark Toal's father, graduated from recruit training with Platoon 96 in 1953 in San Diego. The platoon's senior drill instructor was Sgt. Raymond Kiemel. Official USMC Photo

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Private Gustave Tucker, Platoon 1046, Company C., rappels down the wall of the rappel tower using his right hand to adjust his speed as he descends.  
*Cpl. Carrie C. Ruiz/Chevron*



Recruit Randal Paul, Platoon 1046, Company C, throws his carabineer into a footlocker after completing his three rappel exercises. During rappel training, recruits learn how to scale down a wall, fast rope and rappel from a simulated helicopter. *Cpl. Carrie C. Ruiz/Chevron*

# Company C recruits take training to another level

BY CPL. CARRIE C. RUIZ  
*Chevron staff*

During boot camp recruits are faced with an array of challenges. On June 12, Company C recruits faced one of the largest challenges yet, the depot's 60-foot rappel tower.

Before stepping foot onto the tower, the recruits are given thorough classes on the basics of rappelling and how to make a safety harness. The safety harness is comprised of a six-foot rope that is bound around the legs and hips, and secured by a series of square knots.

"The class we received was really informative because the instructors broke everything down and explained to us how each piece of the equipment works," said Recruit Justin Silva, Platoon 1047, Co. C.

During the classes, recruits learn three different forms of rappelling: fast roping down both the wall and from a simulated helicopter hell hole and wall rappelling. The term hell hole refers to the hole in a helicopter's fuselage where the crew chief lays flat on his stomach and often encounters rotor wash, dust and other debris.

Fast roping, a method used for quick insertion into an objective from a helicopter, is the first technique recruits learn during this training phase and is the fastest insertion technique. When recruits

fast rope off the tower, the only safety gear used are gloves. They then grab hold of the rope with their hands and feet and slide down it similar to a fire fighter on a pole in a firehouse.

Fast roping from a hell hole is useful for deploying troops from a helicopter at high altitudes in places where the helicopter itself is unable to land. While descending from the simulated hell hole that is located in the center of the tower, recruits wear full safety gear, unlike when fast roping down the wall.

The final rappelling technique the recruits learn is wall rappelling which is done over the side of the tower simulating rappelling down the side of a building.

After being given the class on rappelling methods, recruits are issued the respective safety gear which consists of a tactical helmet, gloves, ropes and a carabineer.

An instructor designated as the belay man is located at the bottom of the tower to spot the recruits as they rappel. If a recruit falls or loses his footing, the belay man kneels and pulls on the rope to stop the recruit in place so that he could regain his position and continue his descent to the ground.

Once recruits make it safely to the ground, they are instructed to run backwards in order to unhook themselves from the rappel rope and do a jumping-jack to show the instructor they are off the rope.

With some of the recruits having a fear of heights, the instruc-

tors must be patient, said Sgt. Michael Gilliland, drill instructor, Platoon 1047, Co. C.

"A senior drill instructor is employed on the top of the rappel tower to motivate the recruits if they freeze," said Gilliland. "This is one of the few times that we try not to stress them out. We want them to complete the obstacle properly and safely."

Silva, a Burbank, Calif., native said that the hardest part of the rappel tower was gaining enough courage to trust the equipment.

"I have always had a fear of heights, so when I got to the top of the tower that fear kicked in," said Silva. "Once my feet were stable on the wall and I began walking down the side of the tower, I gained more confidence and completed the exercise with ease."

"I was excited once I made it safely to the ground and actually wanted to do it again. It turned out be really fun," Silva continued.

Recruits with the an infantry military occupational specialty may implement the rappel techniques in the Fleet Marine Force, but the primary reason they rappel is to build confidence in their abilities, said Sgt. Moises RuizMarquez, drill instructor, Instructional Training Co. .

Although some Co. C recruits have non-combatant military occupational specialties and may not rappel again, their initial training on the depot's rappel tower is an experience they will never forget.



Recruits from Company C help each other quickly remove their safety gear after completing all of the rappel exercises. Recruits are issued a tactical helmet, gloves, ropes and a carabineer as part of their safety gear.  
*Cpl. Carrie C. Ruiz/Chevron*



Sergeant Chad Otis, drill instructor, Instructional Training Company, center, supervises as Sgt. Anthony Brown, drill instructor, ITC, right, unhooks a Company C recruit from the rappel rope. Recruits are instructed to run backwards in order to unhook themselves from the rappel rope and execute a jumping-jack to show the instructor they are off the rope. *Cpl. Carrie C. Ruiz/Chevron*



Company C recruits rappel down the side of the depot's 60-foot rappel tower June 12. Though rappelling is physically demanding, it can also be mentally challenging for the recruits. *Cpl. Carrie C. Ruiz/Chevron*









Maria Wilmer, instructor, front, leads a series of warm-up exercises during a Pilates class at the depot Fitness Center Tuesday. Pilates exercises require patrons to use their own body weight as resistance for muscle toning and strengthening. Pilates also increases balance and flexibility. Classes are held each Tuesday and Thursday at 4:30 p.m.  
*Lance Cpl. Jose Nava/Chevron*



Beth Sage, oral surgery assistant, Branch Dental Clinic, works out her core muscles during a Pilates class. Pilates helps to strengthen and elongate the muscles through precise and controlled movements. *Lance Cpl. Jose Nava/Chevron*



Simple exercise equipment is used during the class. The Pilates ring is squeezed and stretched to provide resistance to the leg and arm muscles, and increase the effectiveness of the work out. *Lance Cpl. Jose Nava/Chevron*

# Pilates increases balance, core strength, flexibility

BY LANCE CPL. JOSE NAVA  
*Chevron Staff*

There are many classes and activities that a person can use to stay in shape at the Fitness Center on Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., and the Pilates class puts a new twist on physical fitness.

The class focuses on the mat exercises, which require only a floor mat, a ball, a ring and an instructor. Your body uses its own weight as resistance. Pilates is a form of resistance exercise to increase strength. Pilates also teaches balance and control of the body through precise and controlled movements.

“Pilates will help you gain flexibility, increase agility and build core strength,” said Maria Wilmer, Pilates instructor at the Fitness Center. “Pilates also lengthens your muscles while improving your balance and coordination,” she said.

The work out also uses a variety of simple exercise tools, such as rings and balls, to provide more resistance, more control and smooth movements, said Wilmer.

According to a study by American Council on Exercise, Pilates was found to provide a long list of benefits to include improved body mechanics, balance, coordination, strength and flexibility.

The class not only helps to strengthen and increase agility, but it also challenges a person’s flexibility and agility so it can elongate and tone the muscles, Wilmer

explained. Having the effect of strengthening the core muscles as well as the arms and legs, the class can also improve a person’s physical fitness score or just help them stay in shape, said Wilmer.

“It strengthens my abs and works them out so that I feel the muscles being utilized during the routine,” said class participant Beth Sage, oral surgery assistant, Branch Dental Clinic.

Another benefit from a Pilates workout is that it helps with injuries by providing a low impact full-body work out, said Wilmer.

There are different levels of difficulty offered during the class. The class follows a set sequence, with exercises following one another in a natural progression. Beginners start with basic exercises and build up to include additional exercises and more advanced positioning.

Most people say they stick with the program because it’s diverse and interesting, according to kidshealth.org.

Joseph Pilates, the founder of the Pilates exercise method, designed his program for variety – people do fewer repetitions of a number of exercises rather than lots of repetitions of only a few. He also intended his exercises to be something people could do on their own once they’ve had proper instruction, cutting down the need to remain dependent on a trainer.

Pilates is held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. at the Fitness Center.



Service members and civilians do crunches in a Pilates class Tuesday at the Fitness Center. Pilates provides improved body mechanics, balance, coordination, strength and flexibility. *Lance Cpl. Jose Nava/Chevron*